
VERMONT EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS

*Guiding the Development and Learning
of Children Entering Kindergarten*



A companion guide to the
Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities

FALL 2003

Developed by
Standards, Monitoring & Technical Assistance Sub-Committee of
The Vermont Early Childhood Work Group

VERMONT'S VISION FOR YOUNG CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

*Every family in Vermont has the right
to comprehensive, high quality child
development services for its children.*

*Every Vermont community shall
nurture the healthy development of
young children and strengthen families.
To support communities, the state of
Vermont will create a unified system of
child development services which shares
common standards for quality and
respects the diversity and uniqueness of
individuals and programs.*

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Introduction

The importance of quality early childhood education as the foundation for school success and life long learning has been demonstrated by research and in practice. Before children enter school, they have accumulated five years of learning experience with their families, in their communities and in settings with other children and adults outside their homes. These early childhood experiences can ensure that all children get a strong and healthy start in life, which leads to success in school. Throughout these five years, parents, caregivers, teachers, legislators, schools and community agencies all influence how prepared children are to enter school eager to learn and ready to succeed.

The Vermont Children's Cabinet, created by Executive Order from Governor Dean with support of the Vermont Legislature, is committed to the goal that *All Children Arrive at School Ready to Succeed* regardless of socio-economic status, home language, special health needs, disabilities, or family situation. With early care and education being provided in a wide variety of settings, in programs governed by different regulations, the Vermont Department of Education; Agency of Human Services; the Head Start State Collaboration Office and Vermont Early Childhood Work Group initiated a project to collaboratively develop a set of appropriate expectations for children as they exit preschool programs to enter kindergarten. It is firmly believed that a shared understanding of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that children gain through high quality early childhood experiences leading to success in school should exist, regardless of where they may spend their waking hours. As parents and programs work from one set of child-focused standards across all settings, the opportunity to assure greater continuity across settings and form closer working partnerships will ultimately support the child's early learning experiences.

The task of developing a common set of child outcomes was assigned to the Standards, Monitoring and Technical Assistance Sub-Committee of the Vermont Early Childhood Work Group. The sub-committee consisted of practitioners drawn from early care and education programs, Head Start, public schools, state agencies, higher education, and parents. Information from several documents that are currently being used for the development of curriculum, instruction and assessment was incorporated to create a document that reflected the priorities of practitioners in Vermont. These resources included recommendations of the National Education Goals Panel, Head Start Child Outcomes, guidelines from the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the Vermont Frameworks of Standards and Learning Opportunities, The Work

Sampling System of Child Assessment, and standards from several other states. Rhode Island's Early Learning Standards was particularly useful because developers had engaged in a similar process of examining and consolidating various documents and instruments.

The resulting document, *Vermont Early Learning Standards: Guiding the Development and Learning of Children Entering Kindergarten* (VELS), is based upon current scientific child development research and best practice. VELS has the potential to improve program effectiveness and serve as a means to direct information strategically to parents and technical assistance to early childhood programs. The immediate and ultimate purpose, however, is to benefit young children.

Uses of the Vermont Early Learning Standards

The *Vermont Early Learning Standards* is intended to provide guidance for families, teachers and administrators on what children should know and be able to do as they enter kindergarten. While VELS should be used to guide development of curriculum, it should not be used as a curriculum or assessment in and of itself. It should be noted that children may meet the standards at different times in a variety of ways. VELS is intended to be inclusive of all children. The standards are written to include children with special health care needs, children with disabilities, children living in disadvantaged environments, English language learners, and children who are typically developing. It is the educator's responsibility to appropriately adapt these standards to accommodate all children. There are several purposes of these standards:

VELS **SHOULD** be used to:

- Inform families about the development and capabilities of children who are about to enter kindergarten;
- Inform educators in the development of curriculum and educational strategies;
- Guide the selection of assessment tools that are appropriate for learners from a variety of backgrounds with differing abilities;
- Support referrals of children to qualified specialists when concerns about development become apparent;
- Provide a framework for administrators to oversee curricular practices and advocate for resources;

- Focus a conversation among families, community members and legislators about the education of young children; and,
- Link the development and learning of young children to the future curriculum goals and learning outcomes of public schools.

VELS **SHOULD NOT** be used to:

- Assess the competence of young children (VELS is not designed to function as a valid and reliable assessment instrument);
- Diagnose and “label” children;
- Mandate specific teaching practices or materials;
- Determine rewards or penalties for educational personnel or programs;
- Prohibit any child from entering kindergarten; or,
- Exclude any child from participating in early childhood programs.

Overview of the Vermont Early Learning Standards

The Vermont Early Learning Standards is comprised of two sections. The first describes a set of guiding principles that serve as the core for making informed decisions about what is appropriate for young children and learning standards. The second section describes the specific standards for children as they prepare to enter kindergarten. In addition, a section emphasizing the importance of play in children’s development is contained as well as referencing play in each of the general areas of children’s learning.

Guiding Principles

To ensure that the standards reflected an understanding of teaching and learning based upon current educational research and practice, a set of Guiding Principles was adopted. These principles frame the Learning Goals and Examples in ways that would be considered typical for four-year-old children in eight areas of learning. Although this document focuses on the learning goals for four year olds,VELS has significant value for persons involved with three-year olds and kindergartners as well. The Guiding Principles also address the roles played by families, communities, and policymakers in supporting the development and learning of young children.

Structure of the Standards

The Vermont Standards for Early Development and Learning are written using a four-tier structure:

Domains: general areas of learning

Learning Goals and Definitions: categories of knowledge and skills within each Domain

Examples: examples of behaviors that demonstrate competence in relation to each Learning Goal.

Support for Learning: descriptions of ways adults can interact with children and design environments conducive to children’s development and learning.

The eight domains in the Vermont Early Learning Standards overlap with the dimensions of school readiness identified by the National Education Goals Panel, the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework (HSCOF), and in standards used in other states. They also align closely with the Vital Results and Fields of Knowledge contained within Vermont’s Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities (VFSLO) for PreK-Grade 12.

The eight domains include:

- I. Approaches to Learning
- II. Social and Emotional Development
- III. Language, Literacy and Communication
- IV. Mathematics
- V. Science
- VI. Social Studies
- VII. Creative Expression
- VIII. Physical Health and Development

Throughout the Vermont Early Learning Standards, relevant standards from both the Vermont’s Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities and Head Start Child Outcomes Framework are cross-referenced and cited by the acronyms “VFSLO “ and ‘HSCOF’ respectively.

The Role of Play in Addressing the Standards

The sub-committee acknowledged the important role of play in how children learn by including it as a guiding principle and as the first Learning Goal in each of the domains. There is abundant evidence that children learn best through play. The sub-committee based its thinking about each domain on the understanding that children should be provided with opportunities to play in a learning environment that addresses their developmental needs for movement, problem-solving, creativity, and social interaction with adults and other children. Teachers and families can best guide learning in all domains by providing opportunities for children to explore and apply new skills in natural contexts. Responsive adults teach young children by interacting through play with each child according to the child’s interests, abilities, and cultural preferences. Through play, children enhance the learning of skills, knowledge and dispositions that guarantees success in later schooling. In VELS, therefore, play is one way that children can achieve the Examples described in each of the eight learning Domains.

Vermont Early Learning Standards

Guiding Principles

- u Child development provides a foundation for teaching that recognizes that learning is sequential, dependent upon experience, and based upon knowledge of the child, including the child's culture and individual differences.
- u All children will be regarded and respected as competent individuals who differ in their learning, their home lives, and in the ways that they understand and represent their world.
- u Children learn best in an environment where their physical and psychological needs are met because they feel safe, valued as unique individuals, and are actively engaged in acquiring new skills and knowledge.
- u A child's sense of responsibility to self and others is best supported when teachers design environments and select materials that take into consideration the ways that society and culture influence learning and support citizenship.
- u Educators will base their decisions upon current knowledge of predictable sequences of child development and how children learn, the differences among children and families, and subjects that are related to the interests of children.
- u Families are respected and supported as partners in the education and development of their child.
- u Educational programs will be developed in partnership with families, teachers, and the community in order to inspire children to acquire knowledge, build new skills, seek challenges and develop as citizens.
- u Teachers, families, and children employ play as a valuable way to develop the whole child, generate knowledge of the larger world, and support the development of qualities for lifelong learning.
- u Policymakers will take into consideration and be knowledgeable about the education, care and support of children and families when developing and assessing legislation, regulation, and funding of programs for young children.
- u Respect for and the well-being of children and families will be given the highest priority in the organization and planning of community action.

THE VERMONT EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS

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Approaches to Learning

As early as infancy, children display some of the dispositions and styles of learning that lead to success in school. Some children seem to be born well-organized and bursting with initiative while others require some structure and encouragement as they discover their unique capacity as learners. Some children participate readily in active, hands-on exploration while others may observe quietly as they learn new information. All children, regardless of innate abilities or the presence of disabilities, are able to learn and be successful. The ways in which they approach new learning opportunities,

however, will be as varied as the individuals themselves. It is important for children to develop a sense of wonder, a willingness to participate, persistence in their efforts, and the ability to connect past learning to new situations. These dispositions and skills will better enable children to construct meaning about the world around them and attain new levels of mastery. Adults must ensure that every child has the opportunity to direct his or her own learning in this process as the child nurtures initiative and habits for life-long learning.

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
I. Approaches to Learning Children demonstrate positive attitudes, habits and learning styles. VFSLO¹ <i>Vital Results-Reasoning and Problem Solving</i> <i>Learning Opportunities-Access, Instruction, Assessment & Reporting, and Connections, Best Practices</i> HSCOF² <i>Initiative & Curiosity, Engagement & Persistence, Reasoning & Problem Solving</i>	1. Play Children engage in play as a means to develop their individual approach to learning. VFSLO A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-2, E.1-3 2. Curiosity and Initiative Children demonstrate curiosity and a willingness to participate in tasks and challenges. VFSLO 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.10 – 2.12, 2.14 3. Persistence Children demonstrate an increased ability to show initiative, accept help, take risks, and work towards completing tasks. VFSLO 2.9, 2.10, 2.11, 2.14, 3.14 4. Self-organization Children demonstrate an increased ability to establish goals, develop and follow through with plans. VFSLO B.4, C.3 5. Reasoning Children demonstrate an increased ability to identify, evaluate and provide possible solutions to problems. VFSLO 2.1 – 2.14 6. Application Children use their prior experiences, senses, and knowledge to learn in new ways. VFSLO B.4	a. Initiate play with peers that is engaging and long lasting. b. Enter into and play cooperatively with other children. c. Choose from a variety of play activities. a. Demonstrate an eagerness and interest in learning through questioning and adding ideas b. Initiate questions about people, things, and the world around them. c. Choose to participate in an increasing variety of activities, tasks, and play areas. d. Engage in activities that are new and unfamiliar. a. Invest time in an activity and pursue it for a meaningful period of time despite distractions and interruptions b. Seek and/or accept help from another child or adult when encountering a problem. a. Increase their ability to understand a task as a series of steps. b. Increase their ability to organize themselves and materials. c. Follow through to complete tasks and activities. a. Increase ability to generate several approaches to carry out a task. b. Pursue alternative approaches to problem-solving. a. Reflect upon events and experiences. b. Use prior knowledge to understand new experiences.

¹Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities

²Head Start Child Outcomes Framework

ADULTS CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S APPROACHES TO LEARNING BY:

- Encouraging children to try new experiences.
- Being responsive to children's questions, ideas, interests, and concerns.
- Serving as models in how to approach new situations and engage in learning.
- Being available as resources without interfering with children's opportunity to experience and discover things for themselves.
- Being knowledgeable about and sensitive to individual children's styles and dispositions and responding accordingly.
- Allowing children enough time to thoroughly investigate and complete tasks and projects to the children's satisfaction.

THE ENVIRONMENT CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S APPROACHES TO LEARNING BY:

- Offering children a variety of choices appropriate for the different levels of development.
- Being of sufficient interest to the children in order to encourage their engagement.
- Offering opportunities for children to explore interests in greater depth by having activities that expand over time.
- Evolving as time passes to capture interest, increasing in complexity and variety.
- Reflecting a sense of order and predictability.
- Displaying the efforts and accomplishments of children.
- Offering children opportunities to explore interests individually and in groups.



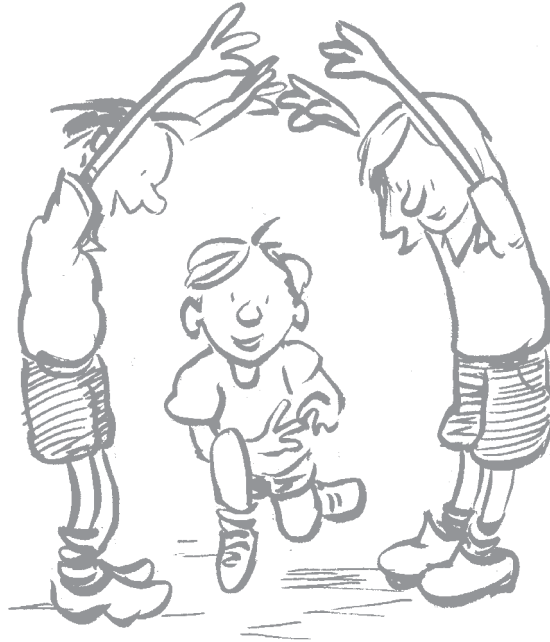
Social and Emotional Development

Social and emotional development are two distinct domains of children's development. Emotional development refers largely to how a child views oneself as a valuable and valued individual. Social development refers to ways the child relates to and interacts with others. Social and emotional development are typically grouped together, however, because of their reciprocal and intertwined relationship. A shift in one domain can have a tremendous impact on the other.

Although the roots of relationships begin during the child's first days of life, they evolve rapidly throughout the preschool years as the child's world expands beyond the home environment. Much of children's learning occurs through their interactions with others. Children who develop and maintain strong, positive relationships with other children and adults are better equipped to be active, successful learners. The quality of preschoolers'

relationships strongly influences how they feel about themselves, ways they interact with others, how they approach and respond to new and challenging tasks, and shape their attitudes toward school and life-long learning. When children feel good about themselves, they are more inclined to treat others with respect and care.

Children's interactions with their environment also influence their social and emotional development. When children are able to safely explore their world and be satisfied by what it has to offer, they will be more trusting and engaged. Similarly, when children are able to accomplish meaningful and appropriately challenging tasks presented to them by their environment, they are likely to gain a sense of achievement, self-worth, and positive self-esteem.



DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
II. Social and Emotional Development Children demonstrate a strong and positive self-concept, appropriate self-control, and growth in their awareness of their responsibilities when interacting with others. <i>VFSLO¹</i> <i>Vital Results- Personal Development, Reasoning & Problem Solving, and Civic/Social Responsibility</i> <i>Fields of Knowledge- History & Social Science</i> <i>Learning Opportunities- Connections</i> <i>HSCOF²</i> <i>Self-Concept, Self-Control, Social Relationships, Cooperation, and Knowledge of Families & Communities</i>	1. Play Children use play as a vehicle to build relationships and to develop an appreciation for their own abilities and accomplishments. VFSLO 3.3, 3.10 – 3.13, 6.9, 6.12, D.3 2. Self Concept Children demonstrate and express a positive awareness of self and confidence in their capabilities. VFSLO 3.3- 3.5, 6.19 3. Self-Control Children increase their capacity for self-control and for dealing with frustrations, and increase their awareness of their own capabilities. VFSLO 3.3-3.7, 3.11, 3.12, 6.18 4. Interactions with Others Children develop successful relationships with other members of their learning community. VFSLO 3.3, 3.10 – 3.13, 4.1-4.4, 6.9, 6.12, D.3 5. Sense of Community Children increasingly demonstrate a sense of belonging to the classroom/program, family and community. VFSLO 3.3, 3.10 – 3.13, 4.1-4.4, 6.9, 6.12, D.3	a. Participate in a variety of individual and group play experiences. b. Play cooperatively with others by developing rules, solving problems, and dealing with frustrations and limitations. c. Explore and understand new experiences and differences among people. d. Discover unique abilities and preferences through play. a. Identify self according to such things as: gender, ethnicity and family membership. b. Separate from familiar people, places, or things. c. Demonstrate confidence in their range of abilities and express pride in accomplishments. a. Understand, accept and follow rules and routines within the learning environment. b. Begin to accept the consequences of their behavior. c. Use materials purposefully, respectfully, and safely. d. Effectively manage transitions between activities. e. Progress in expressing feelings, needs and opinions f. Begin to cope with frustration and disappointment. a. Play, work and interact easily with one or more children and/or adults. b. Develop friendships with peers. c. Demonstrate empathy and caring for others. d. Develop ability to take turns and to interact without being overly submissive or directive. e. Participate in resolving conflicts and disagreements with others. a. Begin to understand the rights of others. b. Demonstrate a growing understanding and appreciation of the relationships, people and places that make up their communities. c. Participate in the maintenance of the classroom environment. d. Demonstrate progress toward an understanding and valuing of similarities and differences among people, including gender, race, culture, special needs, language and family membership. e. Recognize the needs of others and offer help.

¹Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities

²Head Start Child Outcomes Framework

ADULTS CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S
SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT BY:

- Treating children with unconditional respect.
- Accepting and acknowledging children's feelings, and helping them to identify those feelings.
- Helping children express their feelings appropriately.
- Genuinely praising and encouraging children, appreciating them for who they are and what they try to do.
- Creating opportunities for children to interact cooperatively with other children and adults.
- Providing children with a sense of personal security and trust.
- Setting clear limits and expectations.
- Assuming responsibility for establishing positive relationships with every child.

THE ENVIRONMENT CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S
SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT BY:

- Providing space and materials for children to be alone or with others.
- Displaying the contributions of each child through their work, photographs, and words.
- Incorporating important elements of children's lives outside of the program (e.g., their families, homes, etc.) into the curriculum, reflecting the diversity of the group.
- Inviting family members to visit the program to talk about special things (e.g., favorite recipes, occupations, new babies, etc.).
- Offering dramatic play opportunities for children to pretend and explore other roles.
- Providing children with opportunities to do meaningful work, experience success, and show their accomplishments.
- Allowing children to take responsibility for the care of their environment and other living things.

Language, Literacy, and Communication

Research confirms that language has an essential impact on the rapid development of a child's brain that occurs during the first years of life. When adults speak with children in a timely, responsive manner, the brain is shaped so that children understand the construction of speech, learn new words, and become capable conversationalists. It is important that young children have many opportunities to learn language and practice communication skills in order to obtain information and express themselves in a variety of ways and settings.

Children increase their language and communication skills by engaging in meaningful experiences that require them to effectively express their ideas and feelings, listen, and understand others. Teachers must plan for the many ways that children communicate verbally and/or non-verbally. Educators must respect and incorporate the rich diversity of families' languages and dialects into the educational environment as children make progress in speaking and understanding English.

Literacy is the foundation for creating a well-educated and responsible citizen. It is essential that each child arrive at kindergarten able to take advantage of the materials, activities, and interactions in classrooms that nourish literacy. The ways in which children learn to read and write are similar to how they develop language. In environments filled

with language, symbols, and books, children become excited about using pictures, letters, and words to communicate. At the same time, educators may employ intentional strategies to build children's literacy skills.

The printed word, whether in a storybook or in the environment, is the bridge that allows children to connect their own lives to distant places, quality literature, and to new ideas. Through natural exposure to books and print, and through conversations that prompt children to discuss the people and important events in their lives, children discover that written words are another way to share ideas. A child who enters school having recognized the joy of a storybook, a developing awareness of letters and sounds, and the ability to write a few letters, is a child well prepared to learn to read and write.

Language, literacy, and communication skills are not developed solely by focusing on reading, writing and conversation during circle time. There are many avenues for children to develop and refine their communication skills- when they play with others, engage in informal conversations during meal times, speak with their dolls, paint at the easel, and read street signs. It is important for children and adults to understand that communication can take many forms, and that all children can learn to effectively convey their thoughts, feelings, and desires to others in ways that they feel comfortable and confident.

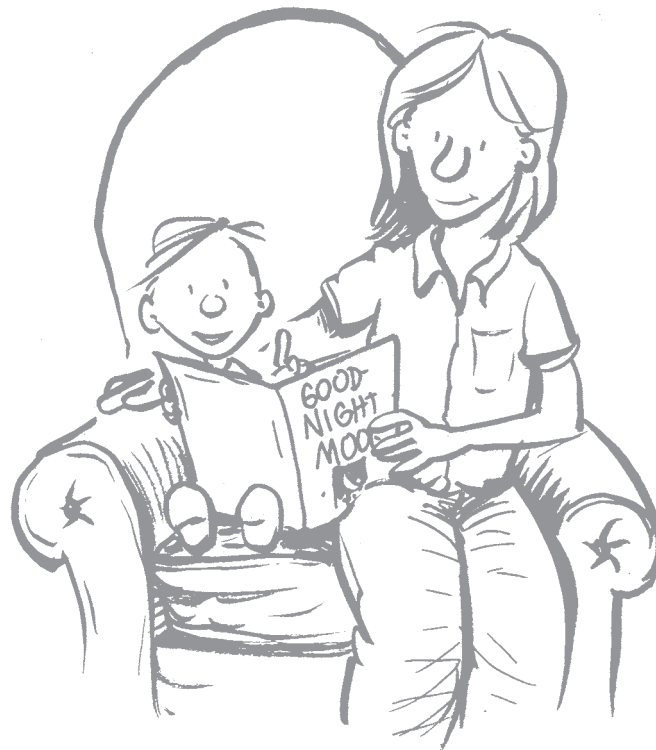
DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
III. Language, Literacy, and Communication Children develop skills in listening and in expressing their thoughts and ideas. VFSLO¹ Vital Results- Communication Standards Fields of Knowledge- Arts, Language & Literature Standards	1. Play Children engage in play as a means to develop their receptive and expressive language skills. VFSLO A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-2, E.1 Children engage in play as a means to develop early reading and writing skills. VFSLO 1.1, 1.9, 1.13, 1.15, 5.4, 5.5, 5.7, 5.12, 5.13, 5.16, A.3, A.4, B.1, B.3-5, C.4, D.1-2 2. Listening and Understanding Children develop skills in listening and in understanding language. VFSLO 1.13, 1.14	a. Develop and experiment with conversation during daily activities and interactions. b. Represent stories and experiences through play. c. Think and talk about play experiences. d. Create play ideas that come from favorite stories, poems, rhymes, songs and conversation . e. Use symbols and forms of early writing to create more complex play. f. Use writing tools and materials in all areas of the learning environment. a. Listen to and understand stories, songs, and poems. b. Listen and increasingly understand directions, conversations, and questions. c. Follow directions that involve multiple steps. d. Learn to wait and take turns during conversations. e. Progress in listening and understanding English while maintaining home language.

¹Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
<i>Learning Opportunities- Access, Instruction, Assessment & Reporting, Connections, and Best Practices</i>	3. Speaking and Communicating Children will use verbal and non-verbal language to express and to communicate information. VFSLO 1.15, 2.1, 2.2, 5.17, 5.19	a. Communicate needs or thoughts through non-verbal gestures, actions, expressions or words. b. Participate in communication around a topic. c. Use more complex and longer sentences. d. Speak clearly enough to be understood by unfamiliar listeners. e. Begin a conversation with other children and adults. f. Understand an increasingly complex and varied vocabulary. g. Progress in communicating and using English while maintaining home language. h. Communicate with familiar and unfamiliar adults and children.
<i>HSCOF² Language Development - Listening & Understanding, Speaking & Communicating</i> Children develop skills in writing and reading while exploring print in books and in the environment.	4. Vocabulary Children will acquire and use new words to increase their understanding and express ideas.	a. Increases the number of words understood. b. Uses new vocabulary and grammatical constructions. c. Responds appropriately to open-ended questions. d. Chooses words to convey intended messages with increasing detail and specificity.
	5. Early Writing Children demonstrate an interest in and ability to use symbols to represent words and ideas. VFSLO 1.5, 1.8, 1.9, 1.12, 1.17, 5.21	a. Begin to print letters in own name and some other meaningful letters. b. Understand that writing and pictures convey messages. c. Experiment with a variety of writing tools and materials. d. Use scribbles, shapes, letter-like symbols and/or letters to write or represent words or ideas. e. Begin to dictate ideas, sentences, and stories.
<i>HSCOF² Literacy- Phonological Awareness, Book Knowledge & Appreciation, Print Awareness & Concepts, Early Writing, Alphabet Knowledge</i>	6. Early Reading Children demonstrate an interest in: <p>A. Phonemic and Phonological Awareness Learning that language is comprised of distinct sounds and the combination of these sounds; discriminating sound and sound patterns. VFSLO 1.1</p> <p>B. Book Knowledge and Appreciation Understanding and appreciating that books and other forms of print have a purpose. VFSLO 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.7, 5.2, 5.3, 5.8 – 5.10, 5.12 – 5.15, 5.20</p>	a. Show increasing ability to discriminate and identify the sounds of language. b. Demonstrate growing awareness of the beginning sounds of words. c. Show growing ability to hear and discriminate separate syllables in words. d. Begin to associate sounds with words. e. Recognize and generate rhymes.
		a. Choose to read books for enjoyment without prompting. b. Begin to read or tell a story and predict what happens next in stories. c. Listen to and talk about a variety of types of literature. d. Retell parts of a story using props. e. Take care of and handle books in a respectful manner.

²Head Start Child Outcomes Framework

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
	<p>C. Print Awareness and Concepts Recognizing the association between spoken and written words by following print as it is read aloud. VFSLO 1.1</p>	<p>a. Show curiosity about letters and words. b. Explore and investigate books and other forms of print. c. Understand that print carries a message. d. Show an increasing awareness of how books are organized and used. e. Show an interest and recognize some letters and words captured in books and in the environment. f. Recognize own name in print.</p>
	<p>D. Alphabet Knowledge Recognizing that symbols are associated with letters of the alphabet and that they form words. VFSLO 1.1</p>	<p>a. Know the names of some letters and words. b. Identify some letters in print. c. Know the names of most letters in own name.</p>



ADULTS CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE, LITERACY AND COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT BY:

- Providing a variety of rich experiences that will encourage children to talk, read, draw, and write.
- Having informal, meaningful conversations with children regularly throughout the day and extending rather than directing the conversation.
- Asking open-ended questions and encouraging children to ask questions and seek answers.
- Exposing children to varied and progressively more complex vocabulary.
- Talking with children beyond the "here and now", using language that extends their world beyond everyday experiences to provide information and explanations related to topics that are interesting to children.
- Making storybook reading and discussion a regular part of the day and talking about the stories.
- Noticing and commenting on letters and their sounds in the words children use and in the environment.
- Modeling the writing of simple notes, signs, children's names, children's conversations as a tool for communication.
- Modeling positive reading habits by reading for their own enjoyment and information.
- Taking children to libraries and bookstores to look at books together.
- Engaging in sound play through rhymes, stories and songs.
- Offering children opportunities to create their own books by writing their stories to pictures they have drawn.

THE ENVIRONMENT CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE, LITERACY AND COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT BY:

- Providing a large variety of high quality children's books and reading materials.
- Providing appropriate spaces for children to use books independently, with peers, and with adults, including a comfortable book corner that is aesthetically and physically inviting.
- Offering materials such as felt boards, story gloves, puppets, and magnetic story boards.
- Including print and symbols that identify locations within the classroom, provide information, or communicate expectations.
- Building reading time into the schedule and routine of the day.
- Including pictures of places, people, and things reflective of the children's day-to-day lives as well as life beyond the "here and now."
- Having drawing and writing materials always available.
- Using computers and educational software selectively to promote children's development and learning.
- Displaying children's work with their dictated descriptions.
- Making available writing tools and literacy props throughout the entire environment.

Mathematics

Mathematics helps young children make sense of the world around them and understand their physical world. Children are inclined to make comparisons, notice similarities and differences in objects, and group their toys and materials. This ability to organize information into categories, quantify data, and solve problems helps children to learn about time, space, and numbers.

When children play in the sandbox, cook applesauce, and complete a puzzle, they are engaging in activities that allow them to develop the thinking skills that are naturally used in daily life. Children learn the uses of mathematics to describe and explore relationships among objects and materials in the environment. They increasingly develop the vocabulary and skills to measure, describe patterns, and to express order and position.

“Mathematics is the ability to think logically, to solve problems, and to notice relationships. It is one way to make sense of the world because it helps us find order and logic by noticing patterns, making predictions, and solving problems.” (Dodge, Colker & Heroman, 2000, p. 40)

*“The foundation of children’s mathematical development is established in the earliest years. Mathematics learning builds on the curiosity and enthusiasm of children and grows naturally from their experiences. Mathematics at this age, if appropriately connected to a child’s world, is more than “getting ready” for school or accelerating them into elementary arithmetic. Appropriate mathematical experiences challenge young children to explore ideas related to patterns, shapes, numbers, and space with increasing sophistication.” (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, *Principles and Standards for Early Childhood Mathematics*, 2000, p. 73).*

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
IV. Mathematics Children develop ways to solve problems and to think about math. VFSLO¹ <i>Vital Results- Communication, Reasoning and Problem Solving</i> <i>Fields of Knowledge- Science, Mathematics, & Technology</i> <i>Learning Opportunities- Access, Instruction, Assessment & Reporting, Connections, and Best Practices</i> HSCOF² <i>Numbers & Operations, Geometry & Spatial Sense, Patterns & Measurement</i>	1. Play Children engage in play to develop and add to their mathematical thinking and problem solving. VFSLO A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, C.4, D.1-2, E.3 2. Numbers and Operations Children show interest and curiosity in counting and grouping objects and numbers. VFSLO 1.20, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 7.6, 7.8, 7.10 3. Geometry and Spatial Sense Children show an interest in recognizing and creating shapes and an awareness of position in space. VFSLO 7.7 4. Patterns and Measurement Children show an interest in recognizing, creating, and predicting patterns; comparing objects; and measuring time and quantity. VFSLO 1.21, 7.7, 7.11	a. Begin to group and match objects indicating an understanding of same and different b. Use counting and number vocabulary as a natural part of play. c. Experiment with patterns and shapes. d. Explore measurement, number, and quantity with various materials. a. Match, sort, put in a series, and regroup objects according to one characteristic. b. Begin to use numbers and counting as a means for solving problems and measuring quantity. c. Use one-to-one correspondence in counting objects and matching groups of objects. d. Begin to associate a number of objects with the names and symbols for numbers. e. Use such words as “more than/ less than” and “add/subtract” to express some number concepts. a. Describe and name common shapes found in the natural environment. b. Use language to understand the arrangement, order, and position of objects such as: behind, on top of, next to, bottom, underneath, beside, and in front of, etc. c. Group objects according to their shape and size. a. Group and name a number of similar objects into simple categories. b. Begin to understand the concepts of time in terms of past, present, and future. c. Begin to order, compare or describe objects according to size, length, height, and weight using standard or non-standard forms of measurement. d. Place events in a logical sequential order.

¹Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities

²Head Start Child Outcomes Framework

ADULTS CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S MATHEMATICAL THINKING BY:

- Becoming knowledgeable about prekindergarten mathematical concepts, principles, and standards, including:
 - Numbers and Operations
 - Algebra
 - Geometry
 - Measurement
 - Data Analysis and Probability
 - Problem Solving
 - Reasoning
 - Communicating
 - Making Connections
 - Representing
 (From: National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, *Principles and Standards for Early Childhood Mathematics*, 2000).
- Fostering mathematical thinking by providing environments rich in mathematical language and concepts through play, problem solving, and expression.
- Orchestrating early learning activities that engage children in mathematical experiences in individual, small group, and large group settings.
- Helping children to communicate mathematically and represent their thinking.
- Observing, listening to, and assessing children's level of mathematical thinking to plan developmentally effective experiences for all children.

THE ENVIRONMENT CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S MATHEMATICAL THINKING BY:

- Providing children with a variety of concrete materials to explore, manipulate, and organize (e.g., blocks, sand/water table, cubes, geoboards).
- Scheduling self-directed and teacher-guided activities to promote emergent mathematics understanding (e.g., circle time, explore time, snack time).
- Displaying abundant evidence of children's mathematical representation (e.g., numbers, graphs, patterns).
- Offering opportunities through a balanced and unhurried daily schedule to engage in and express evolving mathematical thinking in a manner integrated with other learning areas.
- Bringing mathematics outdoors during everyday activities. (e.g., gardening, "shapes" field trip, charting growth of plants)
- Supporting children working together to construct and refine mathematical thinking and expression through everyday activities (e.g., , shopping, dialing the telephone, set table, sort laundry, cook following recipes).

Science

Children are captivated by the natural world and physical events. They insist that teachers and family members answer their questions about the world around them. By cultivating this sense of wonder, we help children to become scientific thinkers.

Children are natural investigators – as they try to make sense of the world, they develop hypotheses and theories. For young children, science is much more than learning facts and skills. It's about looking at things and making observations. It's about putting ideas together to form new ideas. It's wondering about something, forming questions, and then experimenting to see what happens. Then, it's about drawing conclusions about the world based on the results of those experiments. Children ask many questions about

how the world works, how insects fly, how to make a shadow, what happens if two paints are mixed together. Good teachers don't just provide children with answers; they use these opportunities to provide children with the resources, tools, and attitudes to “do what scientists do” – observe, experiment, record, explain, predict and conclude.

“The contribution of early childhood education toward scientific literacy is to lay a solid foundation for the continuing development of an interest in and an understanding of science and technology by ensuring that every child—regardless of gender, racial or cultural background, or disabilities—actively participates in science experiences and views (one)self as successful in this endeavor.”

(Kilmer and Hofman, 1995)

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
V. Science Children will understand and use the scientific method of asking questions, observing and recording their findings and discussing their conclusions. VFSLO¹ Vital Results- Communication, Reasoning and Problem Solving Fields of Knowledge- Science, Mathematics, & Technology Learning Opportunities- Access, Instruction, Assessment & Reporting, Connections, and Best Practices HSCOF² Scientific Skills & Methods, Scientific Knowledge	1. Play Children engage in play as a means to develop their scientific skills. VFSLO A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-2, E.3 2. Scientific Knowledge Children learn about the development of the natural and physical worlds, including: Space, Time and Matter; The Living World; The Human Body; The Universe, Earth, and Environment; and Technology. VFSLO 7.12 - 19 3. Scientific Skills and Methods Children begin to use scientific tools and methods to learn about their world, including design and technology. VFSLO 1.18, 1.19, 1.20, 1.21, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 7.1-3, 7.16	a. Ask questions based upon discoveries made while playing. b. Use play to discover, question, and understand the natural and physical world. c. Use scientific tools as props in their play. d. Investigate different natural habitats. a. Collect, describe and learn to record information through discussion, drawings and charts. b. Use tools and their senses to make observations, gather and record information, and make predictions of what might happen. c. Investigate changes in materials and cause-effect relationships. d. Answer questions through simple investigations. a. Explore and describe the natural processes of growing, changing and adapting to the environment. b. Make simple observations, predictions, explanations and generalizations based on real life experiences. c. Explore describe time, temperature, and cause-effect relationships based on everyday experiences.

¹Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities

²Head Start Child Outcomes Framework

ADULTS SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S SCIENTIFIC THINKING BY

- Wondering out loud: "What do you think will happen if . . . ?" "What will work best here . . . ?"
- Describing changes taking place around us in the classroom, on the playground, in the woods.
- Waiting before answering children's questions; allowing children to discover things for themselves and with each other.
- Encouraging children to make a prediction and then comparing their response with the real-life outcome.
- Paying attention to children's interests and providing opportunities for them to investigate and think more deeply about what fascinates them—whether it's bubbles or worms or dinosaurs.
- Modeling how to use new equipment and materials at home and in the classroom to explore and understand their world more fully.
- Documenting evidence of children's scientific exploration and discoveries.

THE ENVIRONMENT SUPPORTS THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S SCIENTIFIC THINKING BY:

- Having child-size tools available for children to do real work (e.g., digging, chopping, sweeping, transporting) and real tools (e.g. microscopes, magnifying glasses, magnets, scales and, pulleys) to aid in their investigation.
- Including living things that require care and feeding such as non-poisonous plants and fish.
- Giving children have access to the outdoors so they may explore changes in weather, amount of light, temperature, and seasons.
- Having sand or dirt, water, and other sensory materials available inside and outdoors to play and experiment with.
- Having materials like notebooks or clipboards accessible in learning areas so children can record their observations and display their documentation.
- Encouraging scientific thinking by incorporating a variety of tools in all learning centers - medicine droppers at the art table, plastic tubing at the water table, pulleys in the block area, stethoscopes and Band-Aids in the dramatic play area - and allowing space for objects to be observed over time.



Social Studies

Human beings are social creatures. Living in social settings, we develop customs and traditions that reflect who we are as a community in relation to our environment. Social studies builds upon a child's social development by exploring the child's broadening relationship to community, environment, and world. It examines how children and adults live together as a group, influenced by both the land they occupy and their moment in history.

"Social studies is the study of people and place and how each is connected to the other, now and in the past. Social studies is the study of people--how people live today and how they lived in the past, how they work, get along with others, solve problems, shape and are shaped by their surroundings... Every day experiences pertinent to children's lives are the foundation for learning social studies"

(Dodge, Colker & Heroman, 2000, p. 40)

Children depend upon their interactions with peers and adults to construct a sense of self and to view themselves as learners. They willingly explore similarities and differences among others as they mature. This natural curiosity about other people helps children to develop a strong sense of identity and provides teachers and families with opportunities to associate schools and programs with a child's home and community.

Ideas of citizenship are based upon meaningful daily events and a classroom environment that ensures that children are aware of and respect another person's interests, preferences, and cultural background. When children participate in activities that bring the community into the classroom, they feel good about themselves and find out about how different groups of children live. Teachers and family members who help children negotiate the rules, responsibilities, and challenging issues that characterize a vibrant learning environment can expose children to a community based upon kindness, equity and justice.

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
VI. Social Studies Children learn about their place in the world, their relationships with other people and the environment, and their connection to the past. VFSLO¹ Vital Results- Personal Development, Civic/Social Responsibility Fields of Knowledge- History and Social Sciences HSCOF² Knowledge of Families and Communities, Social Relationships	1. Play Children engage in play as a means to develop an understanding of social studies. VFSLO A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-3 2. Spaces and Geography Children will demonstrate an understanding of and appreciation for their physical environment. VFSLO 3.3, 4.5, 6.7, 6.8 3. People and How They Live Children demonstrate skills related to understanding, communication, sharing, cooperation, and participation with others in a community. VFSLO 1.18, 2.2, 3.8, 3.10-15, 4.1-4, 6.4-6, 6.7, 6.12-15, 6.18-19	a. Engages in play as a means of discovering and experimenting with their relationship to the environment, other people within the community, and the customs and traditions of people throughout the world and across time. a. Matches objects to their usual geographic location (e.g., dishes go in the sink, cars go on the street, cows live in the barn). b. Begins to create simple representations of their physical environment (e.g., making "maps" of buildings, murals of the neighborhoods, shoebox houses). c. Begins to use words to indicate spatial relationships (e.g., behind, near, far). d. Begins to understand how people can move from place to place. e. Describes different features of the Vermont landscape. a. Begins to understand family structure and roles. b. Begins to have an awareness of technology and how it affects us. c. Begins to have awareness of money and how it is used to buy things. d. Describes some jobs and what is required to perform them. e. Begins to understand rules, why they exist, how they are made, and who enforces them. f. Recognizes own characteristics and similarities and differences to others.

¹Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities

²Head Start Child Outcomes Framework

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
	<p>4. People and Their Environment Children demonstrate an awareness of and appreciation for people's relationship to the environment. VFSLO 3.9, 3.13, 3.15, 4.6, 6.7-8</p>	<p>a. Shows an interest in the environments where they live (e.g., classroom, neighborhoods, play yards, state) b. Participates in activities that demonstrate care and respect for their environment. c. Demonstrates an understanding of roles played by people within the community. d. Describes the reciprocal relationship between people and the environment.</p>
	<p>5. People and the Past Children demonstrate an understanding of past events and their connection to the present and future. VFSLO 1.19, 4.3, 4.6, 6.4-6, 6.13, 6.19</p>	<p>a. Begins to understand that there are different stages of time (e.g., yesterday, today, tomorrow, past, present, future,) b. Begins to be aware of how we measure time (e.g., clocks, calendars) c. Is aware of changes in self and others over time d. Describes basic similarities and differences of people's lives throughout time.</p>

ADULTS CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S UNDERSTANDING OF SOCIAL STUDIES BY:	THE ENVIRONMENT CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S UNDERSTANDING OF SOCIAL STUDIES BY:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing ample opportunities for children to explore their surroundings by taking field trips in their neighborhood and beyond. • Discussing how people rely upon one another to live in families and communities, and the need to develop rules and customs for getting along. • Inviting community members into the classroom to talk about their jobs. • Modeling, teaching, and facilitating problem solving and conflict resolution. • Helping children to notice and appreciate similarities and differences among people. • Talking to children about their relatives, their heritage, and traditions. • Reading stories and looking at photographs about other people living in different places and times. • Providing opportunities for young children to participate in rule-setting and self-governance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displaying photographs of children, teachers, and their families. • Exploring features that make where they live unique from other places (e.g., weather, geography, geology, cities). • Exhibiting and letting children play with culturally diverse materials reflecting people and ways of living from all over the world. • Supporting children's play in small and large groups and allowing them to construct rules for getting along. • Scheduling ample, flexible dramatic play opportunities that allow children to assume different roles of families and others living in the community. • Offering a variety of reading materials and posters reflecting human diversity, interdependence, and their relationship with the environment. • Designing the learning space and schedule to promote predictability, order, and a respect for all materials and people sharing the space. • Supporting recycling efforts.

Creative Expression

Investigating and appreciating the arts allows children to integrate a number of different domains. The arts provide each child with a way to creatively express one's ideas and feelings. Music, movement, drama, and visual art stimulate children to use words, manipulate tools and media, and solve problems in ways that simultaneously convey meaning and are aesthetically pleasing.

Through experimenting with sounds, colors, forms, motion and words, children communicate in ways that are distinctly their own and that reflect their individual learning style. Each painting, dramatic play scenario, and improvised tune provides teachers and families with insights into a child's interests and abilities and allows children to express what they know. In an environment that fosters the arts, children learn to

appreciate the contributions of other children and the works of others that reflect different experiences, cultures, and views.

Children learn by being actively engaged in the world around them. Children's imaginations are enhanced when given the opportunity to explore and create. They participate and experiment for the joy of creating and discovering. Children experience the world through their own eyes and they form their own meanings.

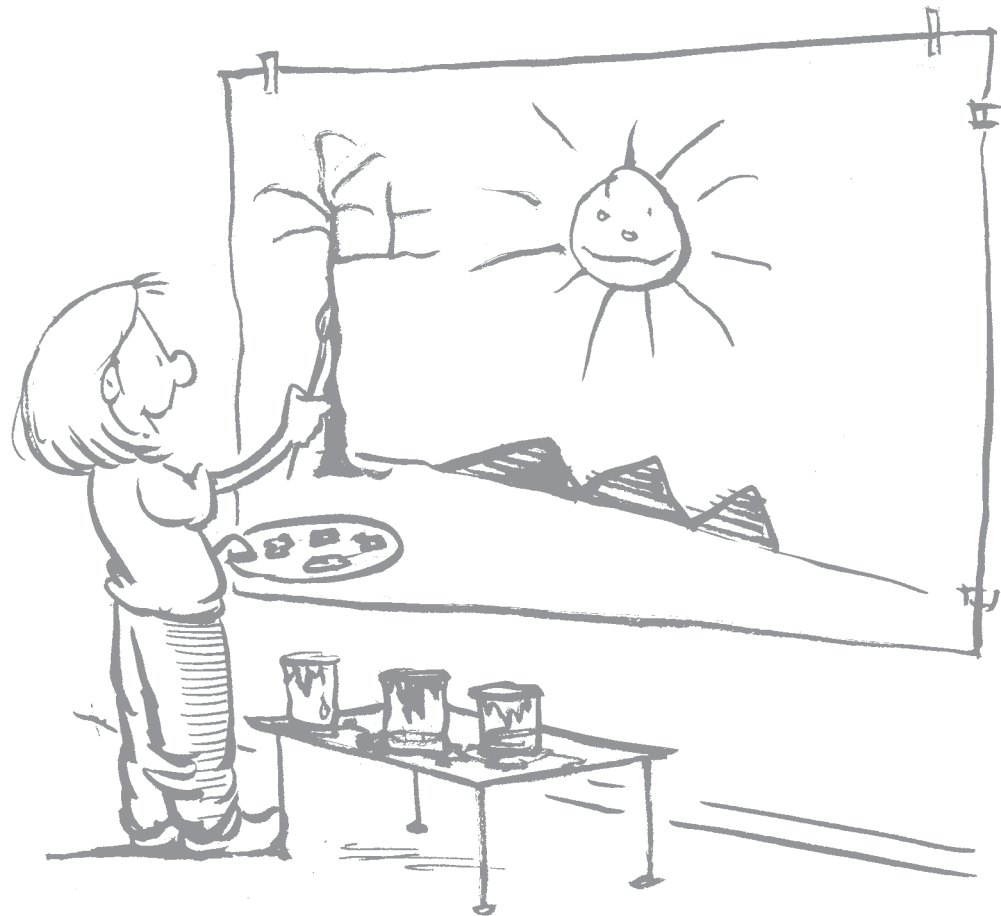
"Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist when he grows up."
— Pablo Picasso

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
VII. Creative Expression Children enjoy, express themselves, create and learn about the arts through experiences with a variety of art forms and media. VFSLO Vital Results- Communication, Reasoning and Problem Solving, Personal Development Fields of Knowledge- Arts, Language & Literature, History and Social Sciences HSCOF Music, Art, Movement, Dramatic Play	1. Play Children engage in play as a means of self expression and creativity. VFSLO A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-3, E.1 2. Creative Expression Children engage in individual or group activities that represent real-life experiences, ideas, knowledge, feelings and fantasy. VFSLO 1.16, 5.22 – 24, 5.28 – 37 3. Tools Children use a variety of tools and art media to creatively express their ideas. VFSLO 1.16, 5.22 – 24, 5.28 – 37	a. Engage in pretend play using a variety of materials to dramatize stories and experiences. b. Use movement, a variety of media, and music to represent stories, moods, and experiences while playing. c. Bring musical instruments and tools from various art forms as props into dramatic play. a. Explore various roles in dramatic play through the use of props, language, and fantasy roles with others. b. Use movement and a variety of musical styles to express feelings, understand and interpret experiences. c. Participate in musical activities using a variety of materials for expression and representation. d. Plan and work cooperatively to create drawings, paintings, sculptures, and other art projects. e. Demonstrate care and persistence when involved in art projects. a. Experiment with different tools to creatively express and present ideas. b. Select and use a variety of tools to accomplish tasks.

¹Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities

²Head Start Child Outcomes Framework

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
	<p>4. Appreciation of the Arts Children express interest in and begin to build a knowledge base in the arts. VFSLO 1.16, 5.14, 5.22 – 24, 5.28 –</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Begin to understand and to develop a vocabulary to share opinions about artistic creations and experiences.b. Enjoy participating in a variety of art experiences.c. Appreciate and demonstrate respect for the work of others.d. Enjoy looking at works of art from different cultures.



ADULTS CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S CREATIVE EXPRESSION BY:

- Offering materials that foster music and movement such as instruments, scarves, shakers through which children can experience a variety of music.
- Allowing children ample time to freely explore different ways of expressing themselves.
- Exhibiting a positive attitude toward creativity and serving as a role model for children by participating in, initiating, and demonstrating a creative process.
- Offering children opportunities to follow movements, repeat beats and patterns, and create new ones of their own.
- Encouraging children to experiment with a variety of materials (e.g., clay, playdough, glue, scissors, woodworking, papier mache', etc.) and talking about the process.
- Demonstrating the use of different tools or instruments yet allowing children to design and make their own creations.
- Acknowledging children's creative efforts.

THE ENVIRONMENT CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S CREATIVE EXPRESSION BY:

- Providing space to promote music and movement experiences; including headphones, cassette recorder, tapes, CD's, scarves, and instruments.
- Having tools and materials present that encourage the creative process such as blocks, drawing supplies, paint, dramatic play props, clay, play dough and providing opportunities to problem solve.
- Making the creative process a part of all learning centers. Putting snow in the sensory table, using music for transitions or recording children's solutions to problems.
- Having materials like tap shoes, shakers and wood blocks available so children can explore creating rhythm and patterns.
- Having a schedule that offers children enough time and materials to freely explore and manipulate on their own so they may see where their creativity leads them.
- Offering a schedule and space that permits children to continue their work over the span of several days or weeks.
- Having materials and supplies readily available and at children's reach.

Physical Development and Health

Children enthusiastically explore how to move their bodies. They investigate and practice with intensity the small motions that lead to the mastery of fine and large motor tasks that adults often take for granted. How a child learns to sit, walk, or hold a spoon has implications for how the child understands space, coordinates thinking, and holds a pencil. Children often describe their competence according to their physical accomplishments.

Children use their senses and bodies to explore their physical environment. Children may appear uninterested in nutrition and sensible health habits, but they appreciate learning how to enhance their strength, balance, muscle control, and coordination. When children

can take an active role in preparing nutritious snacks, maintaining a clean and healthy environment, and caring for their bodies, they feel a sense of pride and accomplishment in their independence.

All children will develop in individual and unique ways. No two children will be identical in body size, shape, or skills. Some children may never attain the capabilities that their peers achieve. Rather than focusing on what children can't do and pushing them to accomplish things that are not possible at that time or ever, it is important to build upon each child individual physical capabilities, making accommodations when appropriate.

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
VIII. Physical Development and Health Young children's future health and well-being are directly related to the development and strengthening of their large and small muscles, sensory experiences and practicing healthy behavior. VFSLO¹ Vital Results- Personal Development Learning Opportunities- Access, Instruction (Adaptive Learning Environments), and Connections HSCOF² Fine Motor Skills, Gross Motor Skills, Health Status & Practices	1. Play Children engage in play as a means to understand healthy behavior and develop their physical bodies. VFSLO A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-3 2. Gross Motor Children increasingly move their bodies in ways that demonstrate control, balance, and coordination. VFSLO 3.4, A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-3 3. Fine Motor Children use their fingers and hands in ways that develop hand-eye coordination, strength, control, and object manipulation. VFSLO 3.4, A.3-5, B.1, B.5, D.1-3 4. Senses Children increase their understanding of the use of their eyes, ears, fingers, nose, and mouth, and how the senses work together. VFSLO 3.4 – 3.6, A.3-5, B.1, B.5, D.1-3 5. Healthy Habits Children begin to understand how daily activity and healthy behavior promote overall personal health and safety. VFSLO 3.4-3.6, A.3-5, B.1, B.5, D.1-3	a. Participate in games, outdoor play, and other forms of play that enhance physical fitness. b. Use their senses to explore materials and experience activities. c. Begin to practice safe and healthy behaviors. d. Initiate activities that challenge their bodies in new ways. a. Build strength and stamina in movement activities. b. Demonstrate body and space awareness to move and stop with control over speed and direction. c. Develop coordination and balance with a variety of playground equipment. a. Build strength and stamina to perform fine motor tasks. b. Use eye-hand coordination to perform fine motor tasks with a variety of manipulative materials. c. Show increased awareness and control of tools for various learning activities. a. Discriminate between a variety of sights, smells, sounds, textures, and tastes. b. Explore and learn to manage a wide variety of sensory input. c. Combine and use different senses depending on the activity. a. Demonstrate safety awareness when purposefully using materials. b. Increasingly perform self-care skills independently when eating, dressing, toileting, and washing hands. c. Care for many personal belongings. d. Begin to understand that some foods have more nutritional value than others.

¹Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities

²Head Start Child Outcomes Framework

**ADULTS CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S
PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH BY:**

- Helping children to understand their bodies, how they work, and how to care for them.
- Incorporating health practices (e.g., tooth brushing, hand washing, active play, rest) into the daily routine.
- Ensuring that there are ample hands-on opportunities and sufficient time for children to practice self-help skills.
- Being positive role models for healthy behaviors.
- Fostering awareness of different types of food and encouraging healthy, nutritious eating habits.
- Including discussions about health and personal safety in all kinds of learning.
- Including children during the pick-up and cleaning activities by modeling.
- Offering a balance of active and quiet activities throughout the day and permitting children the option of not participating if they do not feel well.
- Making appropriate accommodations in experiences and the environment so all children can participate in all activities.
- Helping children to be familiar and comfortable with community health helpers.
- Encouraging children to be physically active and challenge themselves while providing supervision that ensures their safety.

**THE ENVIRONMENT CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S
PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH BY:**

- Being safe, clean, and well-supervised.
- Providing hands-on health-related materials (e.g., toothbrushes, stethoscopes, scales, dramatic play props) to reinforce children's ideas about health.
- Giving children opportunities and time to explore health-related ideas and issues through dramatic play, art, movement, and other everyday experiences.
- Including spaces designed to accommodate relaxation and rest as well as safe, active physical play.
- Encouraging self-help skills and sound health practices by having child-sized equipment and easily accessible supplies (i.e., paper towels, tooth brush and paste, tissues).
- Having space dedicated to posting information on resources, health practices, and other related topics for parents and staff.
- Including materials, space, experiences and time to foster small and large muscle development.
- Providing healthy snacks and meals.

Vermont Early Learning Standards

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS	DEFINITION	VFSLO' REFERENCE
I. Approaches to Learning <i>Head Start Child Outcomes Framework</i> <i>Initiative & Curiosity,</i> <i>Engagement & Persistence,</i> <i>Reasoning & Problem Solving</i>	1. Play	Children engage in play as a means to develop their individual approach to learning.	A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-2, E.1-3
	2. Curiosity	Children demonstrate curiosity and a willingness to participate in tasks and challenges.	2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.10 – 12, 2.14
	3. Persistence	Children demonstrate an increased ability to show initiative, accept help, take risks, and work towards completing tasks.	2.9, 2.10, 2.11, 2.14, 3.14
	4. Self-organization	Children demonstrate an increased ability to establish goals, develop and follow through with plans.	B.4, C.3
	5. Reasoning	Children demonstrate an increased ability to identify, evaluate and provide possible solutions to problems.	2.1 – 14
	6. Application	Children use their prior experiences, senses, and knowledge to learn in new ways.	B.4

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS	DEFINITION	VFSLO REFERENCE
II. Social and Emotional Development <i>Head Start Child Outcomes Framework</i> <i>Self-Concept, Self-Control, Social Relationships, Cooperation, and Knowledge of Families & Communities</i>	1. Play	Children use play as a vehicle to build relationships and to develop an appreciation for their own abilities and accomplishments.	3.3, 3.10 – 3.13, 6.9, 6.12, D.3
	2. Self Concept	Children demonstrate and express a positive awareness of self and an awareness of limitations.	3.3- 3.5, 6.19
	3. Self Control	Children increase their capacity for self-control and to deal with frustrations, and increase their awareness of limitations.	3.3-3.7, 3.11, 3.12, 6.18
	4. Interactions with Others	Children develop successful relationships with other members of their learning community.	3.3, 3.10 – 3.13, 4.1-4.4, 6.9, 6.12, D.3
	5.Sense of Community	Children increasingly demonstrate a sense of belonging to the classroom/program, family and community.	3.3, 3.10 – 3.13, 4.1-4.4, 6.9, 6.12, D.3

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS	DEFINITION	VFSLO REFERENCE
III. Language, Literacy & Communication <i>Head Start Child Outcomes Framework Language Development -Listening & Understanding, Speaking & Communicating</i>	1. Play	Children engage in play as a means to develop their receptive and expressive language skills.	A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-2, E.1
		Children engage in play as a means to develop early reading and writing skills.	1.1, 1.9, 1.13, 1.15, 5.4, 5.7, 5.12-.3, 5.16, A.3-4, B.1, B.3-5, C.4, D.1-2
	2. Listening and Understanding	Children develop skills in listening and in understanding language.	1.13, 1.14
	3. Speaking and Communicating	Children will use verbal and non-verbal language to express and to communicate information.	1.15, 2.1, 2.2, 5.17, 5.19
	4. Vocabulary	Children will acquire and use new words to increase their understanding and express ideas.	1.5, 1.8, 1.9, 1.12, 1.17, 5.21
	5. Early Writing	Children demonstrate an interest and ability in using symbols to represent words and ideas.	1.1
	6. Early Reading	Children demonstrate an interest in: <i>Phonemic and Phonological Awareness</i> - Learning letters and the combination of letter sounds with letter symbols <i>Book Knowledge and Appreciation</i> – Understanding and appreciating that books and other forms of print have a purpose. <i>Print Awareness and Concepts</i> - Recognizing the association between spoken and written words by following print as it is read aloud. <i>Alphabet Knowledge</i> - Recognizing that symbols are associated with letters of the alphabet and that they form words.	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.7, 5.2, 5.3, 5.8 – 5.10, 5.12 – 5.15, 5.20 1.1 1.1

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS	DEFINITION	VFSLO REFERENCE
IV. Mathematics <i>Head Start Child Outcomes Framework Numbers & Operations, Geometry & Spatial Sense, Patterns & Measurement</i>	1. Play	Children engage in play to develop and add to their mathematical thinking and problem solving.	A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, C.4, D.1-2, E.3
	2. Numbers and Operations	Children show interest and curiosity in counting and grouping objects and numbers.	1.20, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 7.6, 7.8, 7.10
	3. Geometry and Spatial Sense	Children show an interest in recognizing and creating shapes and an awareness of position in space.	7.7
	4. Patterns and Measurement	Children show an interest in recognizing and creating patterns, comparing, and measuring time and quantity.	1.21, 7.7, 7.11

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS	DEFINITION	VFSLO REFERENCE
V. Science <i>Head Start Child Outcomes Framework Scientific Skills & Methods, Scientific Knowledge</i>	1. Play	Children engage in play as a means to develop their scientific skills.	A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-2, E.3
	2. Scientific Knowledge	Children learn about the development of the natural and physical worlds.	7.12 – 19
	3. Scientific Skills and Methods	Children begin to use scientific tools and methods to learn about their world.	1.18, 1.19, 1.20, 1.21, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 7.1-3

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS	DEFINITION	VFSLO REFERENCE
VI. Social Studies <i>Head Start Child Outcomes Framework No corresponding domain</i>	1. Play	Children engage in play as a means to develop an understanding of social studies.	A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-3
	2. Spaces and Geography	Children will demonstrate an understanding of and appreciation for their physical environment.	3.3, 4.5, 6.7, 6.8
	3. People and How They Live	Children shall demonstrate skills related to understanding, communication, sharing, cooperation, and participation with others in a community.	1.18, 2.2, 3.8, 3.10-15, 4.1-4, 6.4-6, 6.7, 6.12-15, 6.18-19
	4. People and Their Environment	Children demonstrate an awareness of and appreciation for the environment.	3.9, 3.13, 3.15, 4.6, 6.7-8
	5. People and the Past	Children demonstrate an understanding of past events and their connection to the present and future.	1.19, 4.3, 4.6, 6.4-6, 6.13, 6.19

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS	DEFINITION	VFSLO REFERENCE
VII. Creative Expression <i>Head Start</i> <i>Child Outcomes Framework</i> <i>Music, Art, Movement,</i> <i>Dramatic Play</i>	1. Play	Children engage in play as a means of self expression and creativity.	A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-3, E.1
	2. Creative Expression	Children engage in individual or group activities that represent real-life experiences, ideas, knowledge, feelings and fantasy.	1.16, 5.22 – 24, 5.28 – 37
	3. Tools	Children use a variety of tools and art media to creatively express their ideas.	1.16, 5.22 – 24, 5.28 – 37
	4. Appreciation of the Arts	Children express interest in and begin to build a knowledge base in the arts.	1.16, 5.14, 5.22 –24, 5.28 – 37

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS	DEFINITION	VFSLO REFERENCE
VIII. Physical Health and Development <i>Head Start</i> <i>Child Outcomes Framework</i> <i>Fine Motor Skills, Gross Motor Skills, Health Status & Practices</i>	1. Play	Children engage in play as a means to understand healthy behavior and develop their physical bodies.	A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-3
	2. Gross Motor/ Large Muscle	Children increasingly move their bodies in ways that demonstrate control, balance, and coordination.	3.4, A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-3
	3. Fine Motor/ Small Muscle	Children use their fingers and hands in ways that develop hand-eye coordination, strength, control, and object manipulation.	3.4, A.3-5, B.1, B.5, D.1-3
	4. Senses	Children increase their understanding of the use of their eyes, ears, fingers, nose, and mouth, and how the senses work together.	3.4 – 3.6, A.3-5, B.1, B.5, D.1-3
	5. Healthy Habits	Children begin to understand how daily activity and healthy behavior promote overall personal health and safety.	3.4-3.6, A.3-5, B.1, B.5, D.1-3

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Appendix 1

Early Learning Standards: Creating The Conditions For Success

A Joint Position Statement of
The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and
The National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS/SDE)

Approved November 19, 2002

Executive Summary

Introduction

Early childhood education has become part of a standards-based environment. More than 25 states have standards¹ describing desired results, outcomes, or learning expectations for children below kindergarten age; Head Start has developed a Child Outcomes Framework; and national organizations have developed content standards in areas such as early literacy and mathematics. This movement raises significant educational, ethical, developmental, programmatic, assessment, and policy issues. Rather than writing a new set of standards, in this position statement NAEYC and NAECS/SDE address those issues, describing four features that are essential if early learning standards are to be developmentally effective. The recommendations in this position statement are most relevant to young children of preschool or prekindergarten age, with and without disabilities, in group settings including state prekindergarten programs, community child care,

family child care, and Head Start. However, the recommendations can guide the development and implementation of standards for younger and older children as well.

The Position

The first years of life are critical for later outcomes. Young children have an innate desire to learn. That desire can be supported or undermined by early experiences. High-quality early childhood education can promote intellectual, language, physical, social, and emotional development, creating school readiness and building a foundation for later academic and social competence. By defining the desired content and outcomes of young children's education, early learning standards can lead to greater opportunities for positive development and learning in these early years. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State

Departments of Education (NAECS/SDE) take the position that early learning standards can be a valuable part of a comprehensive, high-quality system of services for young children, contributing to young children's educational experiences and to their future success. But these results can be achieved only if early learning standards (1) emphasize significant, developmentally appropriate content and outcomes; (2) are developed and reviewed through informed, inclusive processes; (3) use implementation and assessment strategies that are ethical and appropriate for young children; and (4) are accompanied by strong supports for early childhood programs, professionals, and families.

Because of the educational and developmental risks for vulnerable young children if standards are not well developed and implemented, the recommendations in this position statement are embedded in and refer to the principles set forth in NAEYC's code of ethical conduct.

According to this code, early childhood professionals and others affecting young children's education must promote those practices that benefit young children, and they must refuse to participate in educational practices that harm young children. Thus, a test of the value of any standards effort is whether it promotes educationally and developmentally positive outcomes and whether it avoids penalizing or excluding children from needed services and supports.

Essential Features

A developmentally effective system of early learning standards must include four essential features:

1. Effective Early Learning Standards Emphasize Significant, Developmentally Appropriate Content and Outcomes

- Effective early learning standards give emphasis to **all domains** of early

development and learning.

- The content and desired outcomes of effective early learning standards are **meaningful and important** to children's current well-being and later learning.
- Rather than relying on simplifications of standards for older children, the content and desired outcomes of effective early learning standards are **based on research about** the processes, sequences, and long-term consequences of **early learning and development**.
- Effective early learning standards create **appropriate expectations** by linking content and desired outcomes to specific ages or developmental periods.
- The content of effective early learning standards, and expectations for children's mastery of the standards, must **accommodate variations**—community, cultural, linguistic, and individual—that best support positive outcomes. To do so, early learning standards must encompass the widest possible range of children's life situations and experiences, including disabilities.

2. Effective Early Learning Standards Are Developed and Reviewed Through Informed, Inclusive Processes

- The process of developing and reviewing early learning standards relies on relevant, valid **sources of expertise**.

- The process of developing and reviewing early learning standards involves **multiple stakeholders**. Stakeholders may include community members, families, early childhood educators and special educators, and other professional groups. In all cases, those with specific expertise in early development and learning must be involved.
- Once early learning standards have been developed, standards developers and relevant professional associations ensure that standards are shared with all stakeholders, creating multiple opportunities for **discussion and exchange**.
- Early learning standards remain relevant and research based by using a systematic, interactive process for regular **review and revision**.

3. Early Learning Standards Gain Their Effectiveness Through Implementation and Assessment Practices That Support All Children's Development in Ethical, Appropriate Ways

- Effective early learning standards require equally effective **curriculum, classroom practices, and teaching strategies** that connect with young children's interests and abilities, and that promote positive development and learning.
- **Tools to assess young children's progress** must be clearly connected to important learning represented in the standards; must be technically, developmentally, and culturally valid; and must yield comprehensive, useful information.

- Information gained from **assessments** of young children's progress with respect to standards must be **used to benefit children**. Assessment and accountability systems should be used to improve practices and services and should not be used to rank, sort, or penalize young children.

4. Effective Early Learning Standards Require a Foundation of Support for Early Childhood Programs, Professionals, and Families

- Research-based standards for early childhood **program quality, and adequate resources** for high-quality programs, build environments where standards can be implemented effectively.
- Significant expansion of **professional development** is essential if all early childhood teachers and administrators are to gain the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to implement early learning standards.
- Early learning standards have the most positive effects if **families**—key partners in young children's learning—are provided with respectful communication and support.

¹ NCRESST defines standards as “the broadest of a family of terms referring to expectations for student learning.” This position statement uses the term early learning standards to describe expectations for the learning and development of young children. Narrower terms included in standards and early learning standards are content standards (“summary descriptions of what it is that students should know and/or be able to do within a particular discipline” [McREL]); benchmarks (“specific description of knowledge or skill that students should acquire by a particular point in their schooling” [McREL]—usually tied to a grade or age level); performance standards (“describes levels of student performance in respect to the knowledge or skill described in a single benchmark or a set of closely related benchmarks” [McREL]). Important, related standards that are not included in this position statement's definition of early learning standards are program standards—expectations for the characteristics or quality of schools, child care centers, and other educational settings. It should be noted that Head Start uses the term Performance Standards in a way that is closer to the definition of program standards, describing expectations for the functioning of a Head Start program and not the accomplishments of children in the program. A working group of representatives from NAEYC, CCSSO, ERIC, and other groups is developing a more complete glossary of terms related to standards, assessment, and accountability.

Appendix 11

Vermont Early Learning Standards Advisory Panel Members

The Vermont Early Learning Standards were reviewed by over 100 principals, early education coordinators, preschool teachers, child care providers, faith-based preschool educators, kindergarten teachers, educational consultants, higher education faculty, and parents.

Judy Adams
Robin Amber
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Catherine Audette
Christine Barnes
Judy Bartlett
Julie Benay
Carol Birdsall
Laura Brines
Mary Jane Broughton
Karen Burnell
Jane Cameron
Susan Cano
Anne Cerasoli
Pat Chamberlin
Mary Charbonneau
Martha Clavelle
Bonnie Coulter
Elaine Daniels
Kathy Davidow
Linda Dean-Farrar
Mary Drew
Barbara Dune
Early Education Faculty

Early Education Coord.
Gr. 1-2 Teacher
Principal
Student
Principal
Early Educator
Asst. Principal
Early Educator
Director/Teacher
Kindergarten Teacher
Early Education Coordinator
Early Education Director
Dir. of Student Support
Kindergarten Teacher
Early Educator
Early Educator
Kindergarten Teacher
Early Educator
Early Educator
Early Educator
Director
Kindergarten Teacher
Director

Cami Elliot-Knaggs
Elizabeth Fairchild
Lynn Fitzgerald
Pat Fitzsimmons
Carol Fjeld
Wendy Fjeld
Joyce Gagne
Cindy Gauthier
Julie Gebo
Theresa Giffin

Early Educator
Early Education Coord.
Kindergarten Teacher
Science Enrich. Teacher
Early Educator
Early Educator
Kindergarten Teacher
Early Educator
Early Educator
Kindergarten Teacher

Bennington Rutland SU
Calais Elementary School
White River School
Greenfield Community College
Twinfield Elementary School
Orange East SU
Swanton Elementary School
Addison Northeast SU
Springhill School
Bristol Elementary School
Southwest Vermont SU
Good Shepherd Catholic School
Lamoille North SU
White River School
Georgia Elementary School
Bennington Rutland SU
Calais Elementary School
Addison Central SU
Lamoille South SU
Orange East SU
Sunrise Parent Child Center
Union Elementary School / Mont.
Magic Mountain Children's Center
University of Vermont – PreK –
Grade 3 Teacher Prep. Program
Putney Central School
Addison Northeast SU
Highgate Elementary School
Barre Town Schools
Rutland Northeast SU
Rutland Northeast SU
Richford Elementary School
Berlin Elementary School
Addison Central SU
Union Elementary School / Mont.

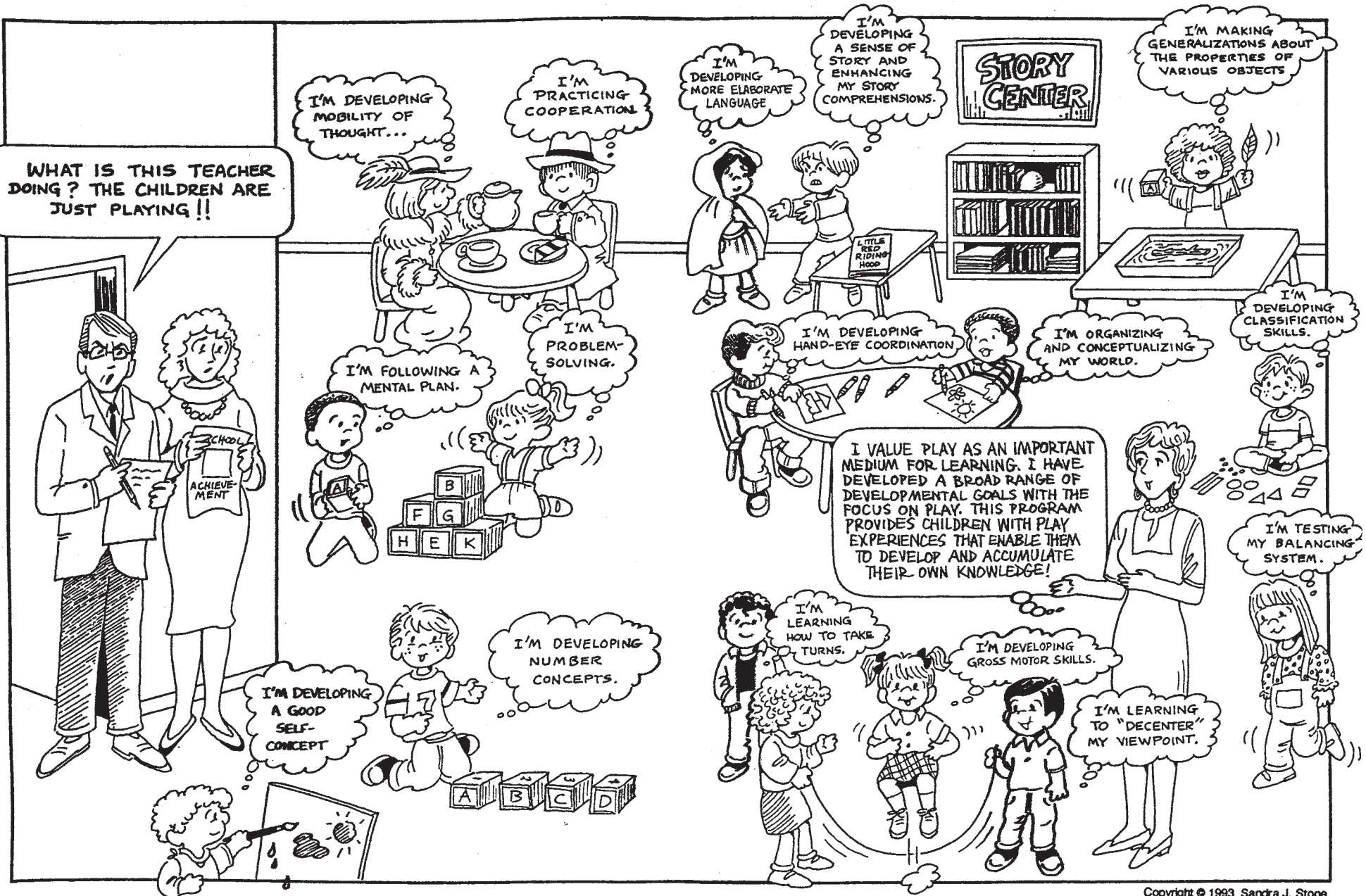
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Elaine Gordon
Carolyn Guest
Hope Hutchinson
Birdi Kaplan
Bev Keck
Beth Kinney
Paula Kitchel
Joan Knight
Mary Koen
Sharon Ladago
Michele LaRouche
Susan Lavigne
Sally Lawyer
Mary Leadbetter
Shauna Lee
Deb Lendway
Marion Leonard
Susan Linskey
Ellen Livingston
Mary Macomber
Carol Mandracchia
Diane Marcoux-LaClair
Jean Mayer
Dona Meltzer
Diane Minton
Sue Moore
Carmen Murray
Patti O'Donohue
Sue Owings
Jean Peterson
Carol Pickett
Joann Pye
Rob Reade

Kindergarten Teacher
Early Educator
Early Educator
Early Educator
Early Educator
Early Educator
Kindergarten Teacher
EEE Coordinator
Early Education Coord.
Kindergarten Teacher
Early Education Coord.
Early Educator
Early Educator
Kindergarten Teacher
Kindergarten Teacher
Early Educator
Early Educator
Early Educator
Early Educator
Coordinator
Early Educator
Early Educator
Early Educator
Kindergarten Teacher
Early Educator
Early Educator
Early Educator
Early Educator
Principal
Early Educator
Early Educator
Kindergarten Teacher
Principal
Early Educator
Early Educator

Sherburne Elementary School
Rutland Northeast SU
Westminster Central School
Essex Caledonia SU
Orange East SU
Orange East SU
Union Elementary School / Mont.
Windham Southwest SU
Caledonia Central SU
St. Albans Elementary School
Rutland Northeast SU
Rutland Northeast SU
Bennington Rutland SU
Charlotte Central School
St. Albans Elementary School
Guildhall Elementary School
Addison Central SU
Rutland Northeast SU
Addison Central SU
CVOEO Head Start
Lamoille Family Center
Miller's Run School (Sheffield)
Deerfield Valley Elem. School
Hyde Park Elementary School
Bennington Rutland SU
Randolph Elementary School
Lamoille North SU
Lamoille South SU
Brighton Elementary/Island Pond
Addison Central SU
Deerfield Valley Elem. School
Calais Elementary School
Bridgewater Elementary School
Rutland Northeast SU
Orange East SU

Amy Rider	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	Georgia Elementary School
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Ellen Rose	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	St. Albans Elementary School
Kathleen Rowe	<i>Early Educator</i>	Bennington Rutland SU
John Rowell	<i>Special Services Coord.</i>	Georgia Elementary School
Linda Rowell	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	Georgia Elementary School
Lesley Rower	<i>Early Educator</i>	Orange East SU
Ebeth Scatchard	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	Charlotte Central School
Allison Shantz	<i>Speech/ Lang. Pathologist</i>	Windham South SU
Chris Schillhammer	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	Charlotte Central School
Vicki Shaw	<i>Parent / Success By Six</i>	Franklin County Success By Six
Sue Smiel	<i>Early Educator</i>	Rutland Northeast SU
Carolyn Smith	<i>Early Educator</i>	Lamoille North SU
Paulette Staats	<i>Early Educator</i>	Randolph Elementary School
Lesley Stanley	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	Townsend Elementary School
Sue Stanley	<i>Child Care Trainer</i>	Family Center of NW Vermont
Mark Sustic	<i>Instructor</i>	University of Vermont
Deborah Tewksbury	<i>Reading Specialist</i>	Calais Elementary School
Sue Tougas	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	Georgia Elementary School
Lowell VanDerlip	<i>Principal</i>	Berlin Elementary School
Early Education Curriculum Com.		
Cill Waterhouse	<i>Early Educator</i>	Washington West SU
Rebecca Webb	<i>Early Educator</i>	Bennington Rutland SU
Cathi Weist	<i>Early Educator</i>	Grand Isle SU
Beth West	<i>Early Educator</i>	Grand Isle SU
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Alice Worth	<i>Curriculum Coordinator</i>	Bennington Rutland SU
Wendy Wright	<i>Early Educator</i>	Orange East SU
		Brighton Elementary/Island Pond

WHAT IS THIS TEACHER
DOING? THE CHILDREN ARE
JUST PLAYING !!





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